

Nearly 87 crore bank accounts so far seeded with Aadhaar

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A MONTH BEFORE the expiry of the deadline, around 80% of bank accounts and 60% of mobile connections have been linked with national biometric identifier Aadhaar, according to a senior official at UIDAI.

The government has mandated submission of the 12-digit unique identity number by every bank account holder by March 31, 2018 to weed out unaccounted wealth. For the same purpose, Aadhaar linking with income-tax permanent account number or PAN has also been made mandatory.

By March 31, all mobile SIM cards are also to be linked with Aadhaar to establish the identity of mobile phone users.

Of 109.9 crore banks accounts, almost 87 crore have been seed with Aadhaar, said the official of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), which issues the



national ID number. Of this, 58 crore have already been verified while in case of the rest the authentication process is underway with documents that have been submitted to banks, the official said. He also said as against the 142.9 crore active mobile connections, 85.7 crore have already been linked with Aadhaar.

When contacted, UIDAI chief executive Ajay Bhushan Pandey said: "Yes, about 80% of the bank accounts have been seeded with Aadhaar, and we hope that the remaining will be covered soon... Financial losses caused to banks and

genuine account holders through identity frauds will be curbed."

With over 1.2 billion residents already enrolled for Aadhaar - a unique 12-digit number backed by fingerprints, iris scans and certain demographic details - the programme is the world's largest biometric database.

Aadhaar is required as an identity proof of residents by various government and non-government entities.

While a five-judge Constitution bench is hearing a clutch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the

Aadhaar programme, as things stand at present, PAN, bank accounts, credit cards, insurance policies, mutual funds, pension plans and social welfare benefits will have to be linked to Aadhaar by March 31, 2018.

Relax deadline for linking bank accounts with Aadhaar: Assocham

Industry body Assocham on Sunday urged the government to relax the deadline for linking bank accounts, particularly those in the PSBs to Aadhaar, saying post-PNB scam, the PSU lenders are fire fighting to protect their core business and are hard pressed for human and other resources. It said the economy has just about to come out of the impact of demonetisation and the GST and is not ready for another challenge by way of any bank account becoming inoperative after March 31.